Extradition of hijacker from U.K.

48. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the hijacker Omar Saeed Sheikh of recently freed Indian Airlines Flight IC 814 is a British national;

(b) if so, whether government have taken up the question of his extradition with the U.K. Government;

(c) if so, the details thereof stating the response received; and

(d) if not, whether Government proposes to do so?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government has not made any formal request to the British Government in this regard since there are, so far, no reports to suggest that Omar Saeed Sheikh is presently in the U.K.

(d) The matter has been discussed with the British Government which has assured us of their cooperation in the matter within the framework of the provisions of the Indo-British Extradition Treaty signed in 1992.

Passport Offices in the Country

49. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Passport Offices proposed to be opened in the country, state-wise; and

(b) by when they would be opened?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) There is no proposal at present to open any new Passport Offices anywhere in the country.

(b) Does not arise.